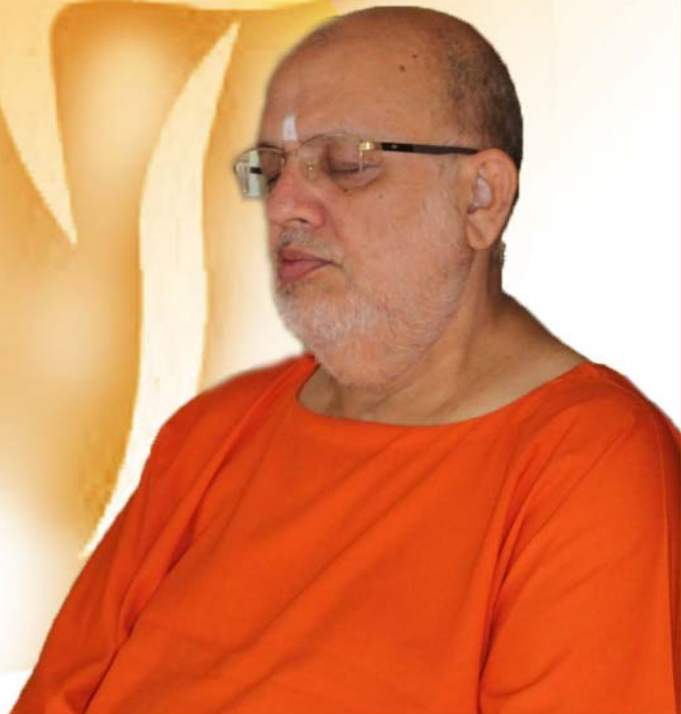


# VEDANTA ARTICLES

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Part : 3

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ब्रह्मास्मि



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## JAPA SADHANA

**J**apa literally means repetition. It stands for retention of some awareness. It could be of anything. Belief about the existence of God, belief about the qualities or nature of God, belief about the truth about oneself or others etc. When loving awareness is retained about something then it operates on our psyche in various ways to dissolve all that which the absence of this belief had created in our minds.



## JAPA SADHANA

Japa could be of some Mantra which is meaningful to us or not. Both have some role to play. Those without meaning bring about some physical capacities and enforce the faith in the existence of God, while those with meaning do all that which the meaning reveals. The Japa could be of various kinds. Uccha or Loud, Manda or feeble, and Chitta or the chanting at the level of mind. The mind which is gross in the beginning should start with Loud Japa. It could be with some variety and even some musical accompaniments. But slowly as the mind quietens then less & less aids & variety is required. Ultimately all sounds should stop and the Japa should continue only at the level of mind. At this stage it is more like intense retention of some divine awareness.

## JAPA SADHANA

The intensity guarantees personality integration. All our faculties should be involved in this act. We are convinced about it, we feel about it and finally be it. This capacity has a far reaching effect on our minds.

There are some texts which even profess some subsequent exercises. Once we have the capacity to retain one thought intensely then we can peep in between thoughts and directly see that which is the substratum of all thoughts. That from which all thoughts arise, that which sustains & pervades them, and that unto which they go back.

## JAPA SADHANA

Japa is at once an exercise which quiets the mind, makes it positive and sharp, and finally that which helps us to see beyond thoughts. Everyone must have some sitting of Japa. It is easy and great. Don't miss the bus.



## BIOGRAPHY OF A THOUGHT

**T**hought is 'the' most potent, important and also the most beautiful creation of this universe. Rest is all its play. Thought is our capacity to be aware of something – subjective or objective. Awareness of any thing is thought. The physical organ which facilitates the manifestation of these thoughts is our brain, while the constant 'flow of thoughts' is called - mind.

## BIOGRAPHY OF A THOUGHT

Man is what his or her mind is. All our interests, knowledge or experiences are different facets of this mind alone. The Upanishads thunder that bondage & liberation too are caused only by an ignorant & an enlightened mind respectively, and not by anything else whatsoever. To understand thought is to understand the secret of this entire creation, and even that which lies beyond all manifestations. To understand thought is to understand our self, because our present identity is nothing but a product of our minds – a mere thought, and so is this big creation too. It is also a product of our minds – like the dream world, but with some slight difference. Creation is available for experience only when mind is and fades away into oblivion when the mind goes into unmanifest state. It will thus not be an understatement to say that to understand thought is to understand life.



## BIOGRAPHY OF A THOUGHT

Before the birth of any thought exists only the potential thinker. To be more precise let us say that before the thought of an 'object', exists the thought or awareness of 'I' the subject. All the 'objective thoughts' are created & sustained by this thinker. The moment this 'thinker' is not around all thoughts disappear. This is what we experience in our deep sleep state. Once the thinker manifests all thoughts are possible. The thinker out of its free will or conditionings turns its attention on any object, and then we have 'thought' of those objects. Every thought is thus awareness exuded by the thinker plus the info about the object of knowledge. Awareness conditioned by the info (like its name, form etc) of any object is a thought. Every thought, thus, has two inherent components : the 'awareness' component & the 'info of

## BIOGRAPHY OF A THOUGHT

object' component. Out of these the awareness aspect is constant in every thought,

while the data aspect keeps changing. Awareness is the very nature of thinker, and like a focus light it just has to turn it on to any object and a thought is thus born. When we maintain awareness of an object for some time then we have the flow-effect, and this flow of thoughts is what is commonly called the mind. If the flow of thoughts is steady then we have a steady mind, and if the thoughts pertain to different objects then we have an unsteady mind. When the thinker exercises its freedom to decide between any options, then the mind is steady, but if it cannot decide then we have a vacillating condition. Alongwith our capacity to be conscious of any object we also have the great

## BIOGRAPHY OF A THOUGHT

capacity to feel. This is not an independent thought as such but an added component in any thought. Feelings provide impetus to every thought, and are also the heart of any cherished experience.

As every thought depends on us, the thinker, therefore we are their masters. We sustain them, and in principle have freedom to subside them as & when we wish. However this freedom may not be experienced by most of us. This is because while going through our various experiences of life, we unconsciously bring about lot of conditionings, which are encapsulated feelings about various things - in our memory bank, and these have the power to bring about related thoughts. Depending upon the type & intensity of conditionings we have the whole gamut of thoughts flooding our

## BIOGRAPHY OF A THOUGHT

minds. Whoever knows the secret of the process of conditionings knows that we are still the master, but those who are not aware of this remain a helpless spectator of flooding thoughts, thus bringing about a vacillating & disturbed state of mind. To be free of our own conditionings is what the real freedom is all about.

The thinker also is a thought. Here also there is the constant component of 'awareness', plus the variable component of 'our perceptions' about 'I' the thinker. These perceptions aspect constitute the so called 'identity' of a person, and it plays a very important role in the whole scheme of things. The awareness aspect both in the subject & the thoughts of the objects are one, and if we look at the world from this aspect there is just one all-per-

## BIOGRAPHY OF A THOUGHT

vasive timeless self-effulgent existence. The second component is the one of change. Whoever directly perceives both these inherent components of a thought shakes up the very basis of his or life. Not only the world around is seen with the constant component, but the 'I' too is seen as the eternal, all-pervasive awareness, which keeps changing its various roles. The changed roles does not effect the basic me, and thus it really doesn't make any difference. I see myself as the self of all. I see myself as the very substratum on which this entire world of change (the transient component) is dancing. This is what self-realisation is all about. This is what moksha is all about. Freedom from all limitations, awakening to a timeless state of Brahman.



## LESSONS FROM DEEP SLEEP



We do not need any new experience for attaining the state of Moksha, but rather need to understand the existing experiences. Out of our various experiences the experiences of the three states are the most fascinating, and literally god-sent. In one we 'see' a beautiful world, a realm of time & space, in the other we 'see' a world of our own projections, and in the third we glide into a



## LESSONS FROM DEEP SLEEP

state of thoughtlessness, where there is nothing whatsoever. No time or space, no me & you or this variagated world. This limited 'I' with all its likes & dislikes is also no where around. A state where we feel completely relaxed & peaceful. It is a joy which everyone cherishes to partake. We transcend thoughts & all duality. This is indeed the Deep Sleep state or what is called as the 'Sushupti' by the scriptures.

Everyone without any exception is blessed with these three states of experiences. There is nothing more in the realm of experiences which we can think of. The entire spectrum is experienced daily. What is now required is to learn right lessons from them. What lessons does this state of experience give us ? Think.





## LESSONS FROM DEEP SLEEP

Some of the important lessons are :

1. Experiences come & go, they are never permanent. Thus ultimate freedom can never be merely some 'experience'.
2. Thoughts, time, space, objects and all our limitations – are products of our mind alone. Therefore when the mind sleeps, none of these is around.
3. The experience of deep sleep state is an experience of the absence of everything whatsoever. Even self-consciousness is not there. This intimate experience reveals existence of a self-conscious reality which is blissful, that is why inspite of the fact that nothing whatsoever is experienced still we experience inexplicable peace & fulfillment.
4. Deep sleep state reveals that 'I' am of the nature of self-revealing bliss. In deep sleep state all mis-apprehensions are dropped and we be that bliss itself. Nothing else really exists. I alone am.





# THE GLORY OF SRADDHA

**A**s the Sraddha so is the man' says the Lord in the 17th chapter of Gita. Every person is what he or she is because of the things he 'believes' to be good or great. Once the belief takes firm roots – it is called sraddha, and thereafter all our energy channelises effortlessly in that direction. That thing shortly becomes an object of our desire and love. We have a goal to

## THE GLORY OF SRADDHA

work & live for. All this is just the effect of our sraddha.

Incidentally, for this belief to take deep roots, we do not really need any logic, but only positive impressions. Impressions during childhood give us a direction & goal of our life. At that time the innocent & impressionable mind of the child is so susceptible that anything which is lovingly & positively impressed upon takes roots, and becomes instrumental to provide a life-long direction. It is indeed a fact that the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world. Later we just follow our conditionings, and the biggest joke is that we feel that we are free to do whatever we are doing. Really speaking once this 'sraddha' is there we just



## THE GLORY OF SRADDHA

helplessly follow the direction. Our goal, love, values and in fact our whole personality is what it is because of our sraddha. Such being the profound role of sraddha, it is no wonder that the intelligent ones work to help bring about the proper sraddha about things which they revere. This sraddha can be blind as well as not-blind. Blind faith is that wherein the person in whom this impression is being given does not have the freedom or feels the necessity to enquire about the various aspects of the thing which they believe in. This is what brain washing is all about. Brain washed people never attain any great heights, they are simple helpless puppets in the hand of some fanatic. While the right kind of sraddha is that impression wherein the person concerned is simultaneously mo-



## THE GLORY OF SRADDHA

tivated to enquire & understand the various aspects of the thing in question. Whenever belief acts like a catalyst to help understand a particular thing lovingly, deeply and with an open mind then that alone culminates into realisation & ultimately the real freedom. It is no wonder that Lord says that ‘Sraddhavan labhate gyanam.’

Let us all not only make our positive belief’s deep & strong, but also work to give positive impression to people around us. Therafter we can relax and see the profound effect of this ‘sraddha’ channelise the energy of people in that direction - effortlessly. Let us also learn to ‘see’ the sraddha of every person and relate with them accordingly.



## IMPLICATION OF A 'PURE-MIND'

**E**very text book of Vedanta says that the right student to realise the truth of life & one-self is a person with a 'Pure-Mind'. This mind is further described as one with the four-fold qualities of viveka, vairagya, six qualities beginning with shama, and the mumukshutvam (called as Sadhana-Chatushtaya Sampatti). The

## IMPLICATION OF A 'PURE-MIND'

method of bringing about this mind is also elaborately described, and the basic thrust is revealed as devotion towards God and a selfless attitude in ones actions.

What does all this mean to a layman? What is the implication of this so called 'Pure-Mind'? A pure-mind is one which is basically a very simple, intelligent, sensitive, & an enthusiastic mind. It is a mind which is observant, and responds out of freedom rather than conditionings. It is a mind which has value for truthfulness & straightforwardness, rather than deceipt and falsehood. By being observant it indicates that it is a mind with relatively greater peace



## IMPLICATION OF A 'PURE-MIND'

within itself. It is a mind of a strong & a big hearted fellow, which has time & disposition to observe & also feel the joys & pains of others around. Such a mind alone enjoys the beauty & harmony of nature, and such a mind alone goes deep into the problems of life.

Once a mind is awake then alone it works to understand the real problem of man or his-mind, and then alone it works to discover the way out. Such a mind discovers that the basic problem is baseless presumptions about oneself. It clearly sees that the ignorance of self alone brings about these presumptions about oneself & the world at large, and this in turn

## IMPLICATION OF A 'PURE-MIND'

becomes the single most potent cause to bring about various expectations and all its associated problems arising out of their fulfillment or failures. Real & Right knowledge of oneself should reveal something which is steady, rather than some transitory understanding, which is subject to change at different time & place.

A pure-mind enjoys making others happy, whether it is man or animals. He thus take-severy opportunity to serve others around. He never transgresses the freedom of others, nor imposes things on others just because I like it. Such a mind alone is called as a pure mind. It is indeed a great asset to have such a mind.






## IMPLICATION OF A 'PURE-MIND'

Knowledge therefore comes easily to them, with least possible efforts. It is indeed a joy to teach something to these people. Not only they will pay their entire attention to the subject being taught to them, but they love to go deep & unfold the mysteries of nature & self. It is indeed a blessed mind.



# SELF-EFFULGENCE OF ATMA

riptures reveal that Atma is of the nature of Sat-Chit-Ananda i.e. self-effulgent, blissful existence. Self-effulgence is the most important swaroop-lakshan of Atma. It implies that to know the self we do not need any other 'light'. This effulgence is generally compared to light. Just as we do not need any other light

## SELF-EFFULGENCE OF ATMA

to know the existence of light, and it is this light alone because of which the things around are illumined. so also it is the case with Atma. We do not need any other light to know that 'I am'. This I is being revealed every moment. First it reveals and then follows the knowledge of everything else. It is this effulgence of Self alone because of which we see the things around. We even see our dreams in the light of Atma, and the absence of everything in deep sleep is also revealed by the self-effulgent self.

This self effulgent self is being revealed every moment. We just have to know it & be it. As the Kenopanishad says 'Pratibodhaviditam



## SELF-EFFULGENCE OF ATMA

matam' i.e. self is revealed in & through every thought. Every thought is like a surface which reveals the light illumining the object. Normally all our attention is caught by the objects of our likes & dislikes, and thus even though in & through every thought the self is being reflected & revealed yet we do not know it. However the problem is never of the absence of Atma, but our ignorance & the subsequent likes & dislikes.

Identifying with the objects we appear to have become like the objects themselves. Limited, inert & changing. This is only our imagination. Even while we imagine ourself to be lim-




## SELF-EFFULGENCE OF ATMA

ited etc, at that very moment too we are free from all such limitations. The self-existent Self always is, it transcends time. Thus it has no birth or death. Knowing oneself to be such an existence there can be no sense of limitation, and thus no seeking or transmigration. This knowledge itself is a new birth. It is Moksha. Reflect !



# THE ABYSS OF DESPONDENCY

espendency is naturally abhorred by one & all. No body likes it, and the moment despondency starts setting in we all are on our toes to do something about it. Happiness on the other hand happiness is naturally aspired by everyone, without any exception. While these natural tendencies provide very important indications as to what is the natural state of everyone, but strange-

## THE ABYSS OF DESPONDENCY

ly enough very rarely do people awake to their natural states of 'Blissful Being-ness'. Strange are the ways of the world & Life. The more we try to run away from sorrow, the more it finds ways & means to keep us tracking. There does seem to be something fundamentally wrong somewhere in the way we are handling this fundamental problem.

Nobody wants sorrow, but everyone gets sorrow. Everyone wants happiness, but everyone keeps searching for happiness till his or her last breath. Is it possible that the problem lies in this very approach & thrust? Well! It does seem quite likely.

What is sorrow & despondency? It is a painful





## THE ABYSS OF DESPONDENCY

state of mind brought about because of some failure. We did not get what we wanted, on the other hand what we got was something just the opposite. So it is something subjective and not anything which has to do with things outside. There are things which we don't want, and if we don't get all those things then we don't have any problems whatsoever. We are not unhappy. But when we desperately wanted something and then don't get it, then alone there is sorrow. This is very important to understand, because then we know that the real cause of unhappiness is within & not without. Now suppose we have to have something, and somehow that thing is evading us, so unhappiness & sorrow starts creeping in, and if something is not done





## THE ABYSS OF DESPONDENCY

then soon this starts turning into despondency & dejection. This is a very suffocating & painful thing to have. When this becomes too unbearable then some people even end their lives. They could not handle their problems, and were never prepared to accept the state of affairs. They till their last moment aspired, dreamed & even prayed to change things.

Can there be any other approach to this problem. Do we have to run away from unfavourable situations to avoid sorrow. Well ! the wise people of the world today & even earlier firmly believe that while favourable situations are may bring pleasures but are not synonymous with happiness. Similarly unfavourable situations by



## THE ABYSS OF DESPONDENCY

themselves need not bring sorrow within. The problem is somewhere else. Lord Krishna says understanding facts like these ‘May you retain your balance & equipoise under all circumstances’.

There is yet another quiet unconventional approach to such a problem. Something which we could never dream of, and that is to let sorrow & despondency be there. If it increases—then let it overwhelm you without you trying to stop or eliminate it. You are neither trying to stop it or bring it. You just objectively let it be there. This apparently sadistic approach of letting our mind be overwhelmed by this emotion is a great new experience. No reaction, no escape, just experiencing this heart-rendering



## THE ABYSS OF DESPONDENCY

emotion fully. Strangely enough this so called acceptance of a situation does wonders.

The first thing which happens is that once we accept a situation without any reactions, then the situation loses its fangs to bother us any more. This is a situation to be faced, so let's face it. I may have desired for something else but somehow that was not to be, so let's accept the changed situation as a fact. Secondly, the person comes out of this a very humble man. The arrogance of being a successful man is no more. We are much down to earth, and we know that if I can not change one situation then I don't deserve credit for some earlier success either. It is clearly realised that there is something more to life than was understood till now.



## THE ABYSS OF DESPONDENCY

It was the grief of Arjuna which worked to bring out a sincere aspirant in him. The moment all facades are washed off, then the person has no reason to put up a front. Truthfulness get a chance to surface. The ego shattered, truthfulness re-manifested, and inquisitiveness brought about, then the door to eternity gets wide opened. Even God goes out of way to help such truthful & sincere aspirants. We get blessed with hearing a discourse like the immortal Gita. Better still we discover an interest & also the capacity to understand it & even live it. Such a person has nothing to lose but everything to gain. While it still may send jitters down our spine to even think of being



## THE ABYSS OF DESPONDENCY

overwhelmed by sorrow, yet if we know very clearly that sorrow is a product of my ignorant mind, and does not have any objective existence, then we can let ourself be drowned, and discover such invaluable treasures in this abyss of despondency, which literally help to get a new birth full of wisdom & freedom.



## BETWEEN THE TWO THOUGHTS

**T**he direct knowledge and constant abidance in ones true essence is the door to total fulfillment & freedom. What ever is the true essence is not something to be imagined but directly 'seen'. It is already there, its my truth, and just has to be discovered. This 'seeing' requires a highly integrated, quiet & an

## BETWEEN THE TWO THOUGHTS

observant mind. This kind of mind is aimed to be created by the various sadhanas of Yoga. Till the time this knowledge is brought about, so long one needs to polish ones faculties and turn ones attention away from other things of life, but once this knowledge is brought about then inspite of the various thoughts the awareness of the truth of oneself remains as it is – and that is what is implied by the constant abidance & awareness.

The journey to the realisation of the truth of one self, begins with polishing & quietening ones mind, conserving ones energy to the optimum, and being as sensitive & observant as

## BETWEEN THE TWO THOUGHTS

possible. Two things which help the most for this is the ability to be as selfless & as dynamic as possible. Thereafter one should study the scriptures from a right teacher and then start the process of Self-Realisation. One thing which is very often suggested for the process of Realisation, is to develop the ability to observe between two thoughts. That which is in between two thoughts is the untainted truth of one self. A thought is defined as an awareness of a particular object. This awareness also has the input of our personal like or dislike for the object. This involves our emotions into the process of thinking about that object. The degree of our emotion ascertains the degree of



## BETWEEN THE TWO THOUGHTS

our involvement. As the objective world alone is 'seen', therefore this alone is taken as that which really matters, and thus the thought of any such object veils everything for us, including the truth of ourself. That is why we are given such advise that we should try to look between the two thoughts.

Looking between the two thoughts imply to be in a state wherein there is no awareness of any extraneous object or the conditionings of ones likes & dislikes. What is there at that time? Certainly 'I' am still there in that quiet mind, but what am I at that time? This is something to be seen and not imagined. Let us not keep

## BETWEEN THE TWO THOUGHTS

on mechanically using some word, but see what is there at that time. I am not a thinker or desirer, I just am, free from all roles. It is a state of being, and in a state of being we have no limitations or boundaries. There is a self-fulgent existence revealing as 'I' – because 'I' alone am there at that moment. This is my true essence, because I don't have to put any efforts to be that. For every other identity we have to put in so much efforts, and so every other identity is comparable to a role, and that which is in between two thoughts as the actor - as it is. So start this inward journey and discover your true essence and make the best of your life.



## **‘VAIRAGYA – THE FRAGRANCE OF KNOWLEDGE’**

**T**he real blessing of knowledge is only when it gets translated into Vairagya. Vairagya is a criteria to judge the assimilation of knowledge. Till the time knowledge is not translated to vairagya, knowledge is more of a burden or even yet another ego-trip. Vairagya is fulfillment of knowledge of life. Greatness of a person is not judged by the amount of things he has around him, but by

## ‘VAIRAGYA — THE FRAGRANCE OF KNOWLEDGE’

the capacity to remain fulfilled by lesser & lesser things, and ultimately by the capacity to remain completely fulfilled in oneself by oneself.

Real fulfillment can never emanate from dependences, but from the absence of all dependences. It has to be a state where one is completely at home in oneself. In fact all grief & pains arise from dependences alone. Greater the dependences greater is the ‘lack’ within. The word ‘vairagya’ reveals a relationship, which is based on true appreciation of facts of life. It reveals maturity, balance & objectivity. It is a relationship where we see an object, person or a situation as it is, and not with relation to ourself.

Vairagya does not mean aversion or running away from something, but being in a state which is free



## ‘VAIRAGYA — THE FRAGRANCE OF KNOWLEDGE’

from the desire of things around. Aversion for an object in fact reveals the great importance we have for the object. The importance is obviously a negative one. In all such cases we end up continuously thinking of such things alone, thus defeating the very objective of vairagya. Real vairagya emanates by seeing a finite thing as finite. We see its beauty, have sensitivity to appreciate it, but do not want it. Don't we see the beauty of world without the burden of having to possess it personally. Such an outlook facilitates us to see the world as it is, and this one quality is the singularly most important quality to see the truth of anything or ourself.

Vairagya is absence of Raga or attachment. What our mind basically seeks is something which is permanent & infinite, and if we really 'see' some



## ‘VAIRAGYA — THE FRAGRANCE OF KNOWLEDGE’

thing as transitory & finite, then there can be no question of having any attachment towards it. In a sadhaka ‘vairagya’ has to be consciously brought about, but in a siddha it is as natural & effortless as fragrance is in a flower. Reflect !



# MAHAVAKYAS

**U**panishads or the Vedanta are the ancient, highly reverential & valid means of knowledge of Self. They are found in the last part of Vedas and are a time-tested means of revealing that which transcends all words & mind. They use unique systems & methodologies by which this impossible is made possible. Upanishads are in the form of one-to-one dialogues between the teacher & the taught and form the philosophical basis of Hinduism.

## MAHAVAKYAS

There are many Upanishads in the four Vedas, but the basic purport of all of them is one & the same. They reveal the truth of the individual as the one timeless truth of the whole world. This by itself is one of the greatest ever statements made by anyone & anywhere, and are rightly termed as the 'Mahavakyas' meaning the Great Statement. A Mahavakya is defined as that statement wherein the identity of an individual is revealed as the one infinite truth, thus awakening one to a state of non-duality which transcends all the limitations of time & space.

Understanding the meaning of Mahavakya is nothing short of a revolution in one's life. It is synonymous with & in fact the real means for spiritual awakening or God-Realisation. A finite individual who has been helplessly, endlessly & yet needlessly suffering the pangs of self-imposed limitations of time & space suddenly discovers him or herself to be free of all that



## MAHAVAKYAS

which he was imagining on himself. That is the power of the knowledge of Mahavakyas. Mere knowledge does all this wonders, because the limitations were not real but only imagined, and therefore they vanish away in the light of right knowledge.

Even though the above definition of Mahavakyas is very broad based, and may include hundreds of statements revealing the above vision, yet, the Rishis of yore choose four Mahavakyas, each from one Veda, for communicating the essence of such statements. These Four Mahavakyas are :

1. Pragyanaam Brahma (Aitereya Upanishad – Rg Veda)
2. Tat Tvam Asi (Chandogya Upanishad – Sama Veda)
3. Ayam Atma Brahma (Mandukya Upanishad – Atharvana Veda)
4. Aham Brahmasmi (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad – Yajur Veda)

The first of these statement ‘Pragyanaam Brahma’ while revealing the one non-dual reality as our self, is also in a way defining what exactly Brahman is.

## MAHAVAKYAS

It is revealed as Pure Consciousness. The second statement is famous as the Upadesha Vakya, because it reveals the identity in the most clear & simple manner. The third & fourth statements are Anubhava Vakyas, which reveal the experience of the awakened ones. The discussions of Upanishads slowly lead one to the vision of Mahavakyas. The objective of all other prakriyas & discussions is to slowly lead one to the vision of Mahavakyas, where all the other statements etc fulfill themselves. The secret of these statements should best be studied through a Srotriya & Brahma-Nishtha Guru. He who is directly seeing this identity & knows the secret of the systems which have been developed to reveal the transcendental truth alone can unfold the real meaning of the Mahavakyas. So anyone desirous of realising that truth should seek such a teacher and request for this knowledge. It is indeed the door to greatest fulfillment & total freedom.